This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in this application, wherein claims 42-44, 46, 50-55, 57, 58, 60, 63, 65, 66, 68, 70, and 72-82 have been amended.

Listing of Claims

What is claimed is:

Claims 1-41 (canceled)

42. (currently amended) An index generation system ~~configured to process data and information from a linked information system configured to obtain a set of media content in relation to at least one tracked theme or topic within a field and to generate a set of links between media content as a function of a relevance to the at least one tracked theme or topic, the index system~~ comprising:

    A.   at least one storage device having stored therein a ~~media content module configured to obtain~~ a selected set of media content <u>items related to a topic</u> ~~from the at least one theme or topic~~;

    B.   <u>an index generator configured to generate an index comprising a set of topics and to associate individual media content items from the set of media content items with at least one topic from the set of topics;</u>

    <u>C.</u>   a <u>scorer</u> ~~scoring module~~ configured to:

        1)   assign <u>a</u> scores to <u>each</u> media content items <u>associated with a topic,</u> ~~within the selected set of media content~~ <u>wherein the score is a value that indicates a degree of support, from a support scale, of the media content item with the topic;</u> and

        2)   <u>generate a combined score for each topic from the scores assigned to the media content items associated with the topic, wherein the combined score provides a measure of perceptions and trends relative to the topic for decision makers</u>

    ~~C.~~   ~~an index generation module configured to generate an index for the topic as a function of the set of scores~~.

43. (currently amended) The system of claim 42, ~~further comprising~~ wherein the index represents a country or an industry and the set of topics includes one or more topics chosen from a group comprising: business, markets, politics, economics, finance, and international affairs.

> ~~D.~~ ~~a country-specific index calculator adapted to integrate international information from the selected set of media content into the index, the international information including at least one of:~~
>> ~~(a) information components for other countries;~~
>> ~~(b) political and economic topics, including inflation, deflation, deficits, exchange rates, reforms, oil prices and supplies; and~~
>> ~~(c) behavioral aspects relating to at least one of wars, reconstruction, alliances, and terrorism.~~

44. (currently amended) The system of claim 42,

wherein the set of index parts includes a behavioral index part comprising a behavioral set of topics, each behavioral topic representing an attitude; and

wherein the scorer is further configured to assign a score to each media content item, from the subset of media content items, that relates to a behavioral topic, wherein such score is a value that indicates a degree of support expressed in the media content for the attitude, from the support scale.

~~generation module comprises an initial index generation module configured to capture and represent a set of behavioral aspects, including at least one of:~~

> ~~(a) confidence in business, including corporate governance and behaviors;~~
> ~~(b) confidence in financial markets, including economy relating to employment;~~
> ~~(c) fairness and equity in management compensation, health insurance for employees, incomes, and unemployment;~~

(d)   uncertainty about domestic political and economic factors, about
interest rates, about deficits, unemployment, and the economy in general;
and

(e)   uncertainty about international political and economic factors,
wars, reconstruction, alliances, free trade, and terrorism.

45. (previously presented) The system of claim 42, wherein the selected set of media
content comprises excerpts providing specific information from at least one of a clip, a
report of an event, or a specifically worded statement about an event or article in
combination with an invitation for a response from at least one of a user and expert.

46. (currently amended) The system of claim 42, further comprising:

D.   a resilience tester module configured to test the susceptibility to change of
the assigned scores, the index, or both in response to receipt of new or
updated media content items related to the set of topics.

47. (previously presented) The system of claim 42, further comprising:

D.   an output module configured to present via a user interface the assigned
scores in combination with media content items to which they relate.

48. (previously presented) The system of claim 42, further comprising:

D.   a feedback module configured to enable users, experts, or both to assign
scores to the media content items, wherein an expert meets a
predetermined set of criteria demonstrating an expertise on the topic.

49. (previously presented) The system of claim 42, wherein the index includes a
behavioral index comprising:

(a)   an initial sub-index generated from scores assigned to the media
content items;

(b)   a user sub-index generated from user assigned scores related to the media content items; and

(c)   an expert sub-index generated from expert assigned scores related to the media content items, wherein an expert meets a predetermined set of criteria demonstrating an expertise on the topic.

50. (currently amended) An index generation system ~~configured to process data and information from a linked information system configured to obtain a set of media content in relation to at least one tracked theme or topic within a field and to generate a set of links between media content as a function of a relevance to the at least one tracked theme or topic, the index system~~ comprising:

A.   at least one storage device having stored therein ~~a media content module configured to obtain~~ a selected set of media content ~~items~~ related to a topic ~~from the at least one theme or topic~~;

B.   an index generator configured to generate an index comprising a set of topics and to associate individual media content items from the set of media content items with at least one topic from the set of topics;

C.   a scorer ~~scoring module~~ configured to:

1)   assign a media content scores to each media content items associated with a topic, ~~within the selected set of media content~~ wherein the score is a value that indicates a degree of support, from a support scale, of the individual media content item with the topic; and

2)   generate a combined score for each topic from the scores assigned to the media content items associated with the topic, wherein the combined score provides a measure of perceptions and trends relative to the topic for decision makers

C.   ~~an index generation module configured to generate an index for the topic as a function of the set of scores~~; and

D.   a graphic user interface module configured to present information via an output device, the graphic user interface module comprising:

(a)   an output module configured to present via a user interface the ~~assigned~~ media content scores in combination with the media content items to which they relate;

(b)   an index feedback module configured to enable users, experts, or both to assign the media content scores to the media content items, wherein an expert meets a predetermined set of criteria demonstrating an expertise on the topic; and

(c)   a content feedback module configured to enable the users, experts, or both to ~~provide~~ inputs ~~and~~ comments related to the media content items.

51. (currently amended) The system of claim 50, wherein the index generator ~~generation modules~~ comprises:

(a)   an initial index generator configured to generate an initial sub-index from scores assigned to the media content items;

(b)   a user index generator configured to generate a user sub-index from user assigned scores related to the media content items;

(c)   an expert index generator configured to generate an expert sub-index from expert assigned scores related to the media content items; and

(d)   an overall index generator configured to generate an overall index as a function of the initial sub-index, user sub-index and expert sub-index.

52. (currently amended) The system of claim 50, wherein the graphic user interface module further comprises:

(d)   a framework generator configured to generate for display a framework related to the set of topics and ~~derived from~~ the ~~selected~~ related set of media content, the framework comprising:

(a)   a multi-dimensional framework having a risk axis and an opportunity axis ~~representing a relationship between a risk spectrum and an opportunity spectrum~~; and

(b)   a set of icons representing ~~subtopics~~ from ~~of~~ the set of topics, each icon representing a topic and displayed within the framework as a function of a risk and an opportunity associated with the ~~subtopic~~,

wherein ~~each~~ an icon is linked to a related subset of media content items associated with the topic represented by the icon and selection of the icon generates a presentation of a subsequent framework and subsequent set of ~~subtopic~~ icons, information related to the subset of media content, or both.

53. (currently amended) The system of claim 50, further comprising:

E.   a linked information system comprising:

    1)   a content selector coupled to a network and configured to obtain media content items included in the set of media content items;

    2)   a linker configured to generate a set of links between related media content items from the set of media content items; and

    3)   a media content updater configured to update the set of media content items, including incorporating new media content items into the set of media content items and adding, deleting or editing the set of links as a function of the new media content items

~~an interface to a set of linked information system data stores comprising a plurality of information and data, including:~~

~~(a)   a set of links between selected portions of information present in the set of media content, wherein the set of media content is available over the computer network in an electronic format;~~

~~(b)   a markup of linked information pointing out relevance of one portion of information to another linked portion of information; and~~

~~(c)   a set of expert commentary providing insight on business and economic topics of interest and groups of related media content, wherein~~

the data store of links and the markup of linked information are
continuously adapted to accommodate newly available media content
relevant to the field of business and economics, and to accommodate new
meanings of previously linked information as the new meanings develop
over time.

54. (currently amended) An index generation system configured to process data and
information from a linked information system configured to obtain a set of media content
in relation to at least one tracked theme or topic within a field and to generate a set of
links between media content as a function of a relevance to the at least one tracked theme
or topic, the index system comprising:

A.   a topic selection mechanism configured for enabling selection of a <u>set of</u>
        topic<u>s</u> from the at least one tracked theme or topic;

B.   <u>at least one storage device having stored therein, in electronic form,</u> a
        media content module configured to obtain a selected set of media content
        items related to a topic from the at least one theme or topic;

C.   <u>an index generator configured to generate an index comprising the set of
        topics and to associate media content items from the set of media content
        items with at least one topic from the set of topics;</u>

<u>D.</u>   a scoring module configured to<u>:</u>

        1)   assign <u>a</u> score<u>s</u> to <u>each</u> media content items <u>associated with a topic,</u>
                within the selected set of media content <u>wherein the score is a
                value that indicates a degree of support, from a support scale, of
                the individual media content item with the topic; and</u>

        <u>2)</u>   <u>generate a combined score for each topic from the scores assigned
                to the media content items associated with the topic, wherein the
                combined score provides a measure of perceptions and trends
                relative to the topic for decision makers</u>

D.   an index generation module configured to generate an index for the topic
        as a function of the set of scores; and

    E.   a set of feedback modules, including:

        (a)   an index feedback module configured to enable users, experts, or both to assign scores to the media content items, wherein an expert meets a predetermined set of criteria demonstrating an expertise on the topic; and

        (b)   a content feedback module configured to enable the users, experts, or both to ~~fine-tune the topic selection, provide~~ inputs ~~and~~ comments related to the media content items ~~or set of links, or both~~.

55. (currently amended) The system of claim 54, wherein the index <u>generator is configured to adjust the index and the scorer is configured to adjust the scores associated with media content items in response to feedback provided via the set of feedback modules.</u> ~~comprises:~~

    ~~(a)   an initial index including a first part relating to selected media content, a second part relating to behavioral aspects, and a third part relating to an external view of countries and regions;~~

    ~~(b)   at least one respondent index including feedback from selected respondents relating to the initial index, including at least one of:~~

        ~~1)   a user sub-index including feedback from the users; and~~

        ~~2)   an expert sub-index including feedback from the experts; and~~

    ~~(c)   an overall index generated from a combination of the initial index and the at least one respondent index.~~

56. (previously presented) The system of claim 54, further comprising:

    F.   a graphic user interface module configured to present graphical user interface mechanisms for enabling the feedback from the users, experts, or both.

57. (currently amended) The system of claim 54, <u>further comprising:</u> ~~wherein the at least one tracked theme or topic includes a plurality of rolling topics, and the topic selection mechanism further comprises~~

    F.   a rolling topic module adapted to hibernate and revive ~~themes and~~ topics ~~from the at least one tracked theme or topic~~ over time as a function of a change in <u>the set of media content items</u> ~~relevance of the themes or topics within an updated set of media content~~ embodying a change in current events<u>, wherein hibernate means omit a topic from the index and revive means return a topic to the index</u>.

58. (currently amended) An index generation system ~~configured to process data and information from a linked information system configured to obtain a set of media content in relation to at least one tracked theme or topic within a field and to generate a set of links between media content as a function of a relevance to the at least one tracked theme or topic, the index system~~ comprising:

    A.   <u>at least one storage device having stored therein, in electronic form,</u> a ~~media content module configured to obtain a selected~~ set of media content items <u>related to a topic</u> ~~from the at least one theme or topic~~;

    B.   <u>an index generator configured to generate an index comprising the set of topics and to associate media content items from the set of media content items with at least one topic from the set of topics, the index generator comprising:</u>

            (a)   <u>an initial index generator configured to generate an initial sub-index from scores assigned to the media content items;</u>

            (b)   <u>a respondent index generator configured to generate a respondent sub-index from feedback by respondents, including scores assigned by users, experts, or both related to the media content items; and</u>

            (c)   <u>an overall index generator configured to generate the index as a function of the initial sub-index and the respondent sub-index; and</u>

C.   a scoring module configured to assign <u>a media content</u> scores to <u>each individual</u> media content items <u>associated with a topic,</u> ~~within the selected set of media content~~ <u>wherein the score is a value that indicates a degree of support, from a support scale, of the individual media content item with the topic</u>; and <u>wherein the scores provide a measure of perceptions and trends relative to the topic for decision makers</u>

~~C.   a set of index generation modules configured to generate an index for the topic as a function of scores, the index generation modules comprising:~~

~~(a)   an initial index generator configured to generate an initial sub-index from scores assigned to the media content items;~~

~~(b)   an respondent index generator configured to generate a respondent sub-index from feedback by respondents, including scores assigned by users, experts, or both related to the media content items; and~~

~~(c)   an overall index generator configured to generate the index as a function of the initial sub-index and the respondent sub-index.~~

59. (previously presented) The system of claim 58, further comprising:

D.   a resilience test module configured to test the susceptibility to change of the assigned scores, the index, or both in response to receipt of new or updated media content items related to the topic.

60. (currently amended) The system of claim 58,

wherein the <u>set of</u> index <u>parts includes a behavioral index part comprising a</u> <u>behavioral set of topics, each behavioral topic representing an attitude</u>; and

wherein the scorer is further configured to assign a score to each media content item, from the set of media content items, that relates to a behavioral topic ~~represents at least one of an uncertainty, a confidence, a corporate governance, a measure of fairness and equity~~.

61. (previously presented) The system of claim 58, wherein the initial index generator is configured to assign scores to at least one of selected articles, reports, or information from the media content items, and is also configured to calculate the initial index as a function of the set of scores.

62. (previously presented) The system of claim 58, wherein the respondent index generator is configured to assign a set of scores from the respondent feedback to the initial index and media content items, and is also configured to calculate the respondent sub-index as a function of the set of scores.

63. (currently amended) The system of claim 58, further comprising:

       D.   a topic selection module configured to fine-tune the selection of the topic based on the feedback, wherein topics from the at least one tracked theme or topic may be rolled from one period to the next by editing or hibernating topics that are no longer significant a topic selection a rolling topic module adapted to hibernate and revive topics over time as a function of a change in the set of media content items embodying a change in current events, wherein hibernate means omit a topic from the index and revive means return a topic to the index.

64. (previously presented) The system of claim 58, wherein the set of media content comprises detailed information including reports, articles and other information that is accessible to respondents to facilitate an educated response for generation of the at least one respondent index.

65. (currently amended) The system of claim 58, the index generator generation modules are is configured to assign and weight scores for generation of the initial sub-index, the respondent sub-index, and the overall sub-index.

66. (currently amended) The system of claim 58, wherein the ~~initial sub-index comprises~~ ~~a first part relating to at least one of economy and business markets, a second part~~ ~~relating to behavioral aspects, and a third part relating to an external view of countries~~ ~~and regions, and a set of international aspects is incorporated into the first part, the~~ ~~second part, and the third part of the initial sub-index~~ index represents a country or an industry and the set of topics includes one or more topics chosen from a group comprising: business, markets, politics, economics, finance, and international affairs.

67. (previously presented) The system of claim 58, comprising a linked information system providing respondents access to interrelated information, wherein the linked information system has a graphic user interface illustrating multilevel linkages interrelating the information.

68. (currently amended) The system of claim 58, comprising a graphical user interface for generating a framework ~~of interconnected information accessible to respondents,~~ ~~including both users and experts; and an interaction environment adapted to permit both~~ ~~users and experts to employ the framework to share information~~ related to the set of topics and the set of media content, the framework comprising:

        (a)   a risk axis and an opportunity axis; and

        (b)   a set of icons representing topics from the set of topic, each icon representing a topic and displayed within the framework as a function of a risk and an opportunity associated with the topic, wherein an icon is linked to a related subset of media content items associated with the topic represented by the icon and selection of the icon generates a presentation of a subsequent framework and subsequent set of topic icons, information related to the subset of media content, or both.

69. (previously presented) The system of claim 58, comprising a feedback module configured to generate a response sheet allowing respondents to provide the feedback.

70. (currently amended) A computer program product for generating an index ~~from a set of media content linked as a function of a relevance to at least one tracked theme or topic within a field~~, the computer program product comprising a computer readable medium having computer readable program code thereon for execution by at least one processor, the computer program code comprising:

    A.   a program code configured for obtaining a selected set of media content items related to a topic ~~from the at least one theme or topic~~;

    B.   <u>a program code configured to generate an index comprising a set of topics, and to associate media content items from the set of media content items with at least one topic from the set of topics; and</u>

    <u>C.</u>   a program code configured for assigning <u>a</u> ~~scores~~ to <u>each</u> media content items <u>associated with a topic, wherein the score is a value that indicates a degree of support, from a support scale, of the individual media content item with the topic</u> ~~within the selected set of media content; and~~

    ~~C.~~   ~~a program code configured for generating an index for the topic as a function of the set of scores~~<u>, and wherein the scores for the topic provide a measure of perceptions and trends relative to the topic for decision makers</u>.

71. (previously presented) The computer program product of claim 70, further comprising:

    D.   a program code configured for presenting via a user interface the assigned scores in combination with media content items to which they relate.

72. (currently amended) The computer program product of claim 70, wherein the program code for generating the index ~~comprises:~~ <u>is configured to adjust the index and the program code for assigning scores is configured to adjust the scores associated with media content items in response to receiving feedback from one or more respondents</u>

    ~~(a)   a program code configured to generate an initial sub-index from scores assigned to the media content items;~~

(b) ~~a program code configured to generate a respondent sub-index from feedback by respondents, including scores assigned by users, experts, or both related to the media content items; and~~

(c) ~~a program code configured to generate the index as a function of the initial sub-index and the respondent sub-index.~~

73. (currently amended) The computer program product of claim 72, further comprising:

D.   a program code configured for <u>generating a set of links between related media content items from the set of media content and updating the links in response to changes in the set of media content</u> ~~organizing the feedback in association with a respondent classification chosen from a set of respondent classifications and a display program code configured to present an overall interpretation to the set of respondent classifications~~.

74. (currently amended) A method of <u>generating an index</u> ~~linking and tagging media content from a set of media content, at least one or more steps of the method configured to be carried out by a computer system having access to a network of media content sources,~~ the method comprising:

.   A.   ~~from the media content sources,~~ obtaining a set of media content <u>from at least one storage device</u> ~~related to a field~~;

B.   generating a set of links between <u>related</u> media content items from the set of media content <u>and updating the links in response to changes in the set of media content;</u> ~~, including:~~

1) ~~establishing a set of first level links between the media content items as a function of a relevance to at least one tracked theme or topic within the field; and~~

2) ~~creating a set of second level links as a function of a set of internal dynamics of the media content items, such internal dynamics representing threads of meaning existing within the media content items over time; and~~

C.   generating an index comprising a set of topics and associating individual media content items from the set of media content items with at least one topic from the set of topics; and ~~tagging links from the first set of level links and second set of level links, wherein a tag associated with a link enables recall of media content associated with the link using the tag~~

D.   assigning a media content score to each individual media content item associated with a topic, wherein the score is a value that indicates a degree of support, from a support scale, of the individual media content item with the topic and wherein the scores provide a measure of perceptions and trends relative to the topic for decision makers.

75. (currently amended) A method for generating an index ~~representing a sentiment, the method~~ comprising:

A.   ~~selecting at least one tracked theme or topic relating to a field;~~

~~B.~~   obtaining a set of media content items from at least one storage device ~~relevant to the at least one tracked theme or topic~~;

B~~C~~.   generating an index comprising a set of topics and associating individual media content items from the set of media content items with at least one topic from the set of topics ~~organizational presentation from the set of media content, wherein the organizational presentation includes a categorization of information from the set of media content and an assignment of scores to the information from an index scoring set of rules~~; and

C.   assigning a media content score to each individual media content item associated with a topic, wherein the score is a value that indicates a degree of support, from a support scale, of the individual media content item with the topic and wherein the scores provide a measure of perceptions and trends relative to the topic for decision makers

~~D.~~   ~~obtaining feedback from a set of respondents from the organizational presentation and indicative of a sentiment relating to the at least one~~

tracked theme or topic and updating the assign scores according to the sentiment; and

E.   generating at least one index from the set of media content, the assigned scores, and the feedback.

76. (currently amended) The method of claim 75, further comprising:

D~~F~~.   ~~developing~~ receiving commentary relating to the media content items and scores ~~information, wherein the commentary has a categorization in support of the index point system~~; and

E~~G~~.   presenting the commentary ~~to the respondents~~ in association with the media content items and scores ~~accordance with the categorization~~.

77. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~75~~76, further comprising:

F.   generating an ~~developing~~ overall commentary from the received commentary ~~based on the results, wherein the overall commentary relates to the field of the business, economy and markets~~; and

G.   presenting the overall commentary ~~to the respondents~~.

78. (currently amended) The method of claim 75, further comprising:

D~~F~~.   presenting the index ~~to the respondents~~ via a user interface.

79. (currently amended) The method of claim 75, further comprising:

~~F.   fine tuning the selection of the at least one tracked theme or topic based on the feedback~~

D.   obtaining feedback from a set of respondents and updating the assigned scores according to the feedback.

80. (currently amended) The method of claim 75, further comprising ~~reselecting the at least one tracked theme or topic over time in view of changes in a situation relating to the~~

~~field, thereby ensuring that the selected topics are critical at a particular time in~~
~~determining sentiment relating to the field~~

      D.   updating the set of media content items and updating the scores in response to changes in the set of media content items.

81. (currently amended) The method of claim <u>80</u>~~75~~, <u>wherein updating the set of media content items comprises adding new media items to the set of media content items, deleting media content items from the set of media content items, or both</u> ~~further comprising gathering new information relating to the at least one tracked theme or topic and discarding old information over time.~~

82. (currently amended) The method of claim 75, <u>wherein the set of index parts includes a behavioral index part comprising a behavioral set of topics, each behavioral topic representing an attitude; the method</u> further comprising ~~generating an initial index configured to capture and represent a set of behavioral aspects of the set of media content, including at least one of:~~ <u>assigning a score to each media content item, from the subset of media content items, that relates to a behavioral topic, wherein such score is a value that indicates a degree of support expressed in the media content for the attitude, from the support scale.</u>

~~(a)   confidence in business, including corporate governance and behaviors;~~

      ~~(b)   confidence in financial markets, including economy relating to employment;~~

      ~~(c)   fairness and equity in management compensation, health insurance for employees, incomes, and unemployment;~~

      ~~(d)   uncertainty about domestic political and economic factors, about interest rates, about deficits, unemployment, and the economy in general; and~~

      ~~(e)   uncertainty about international political and economic factors, wars, reconstruction, alliances, free trade, and terrorism.~~